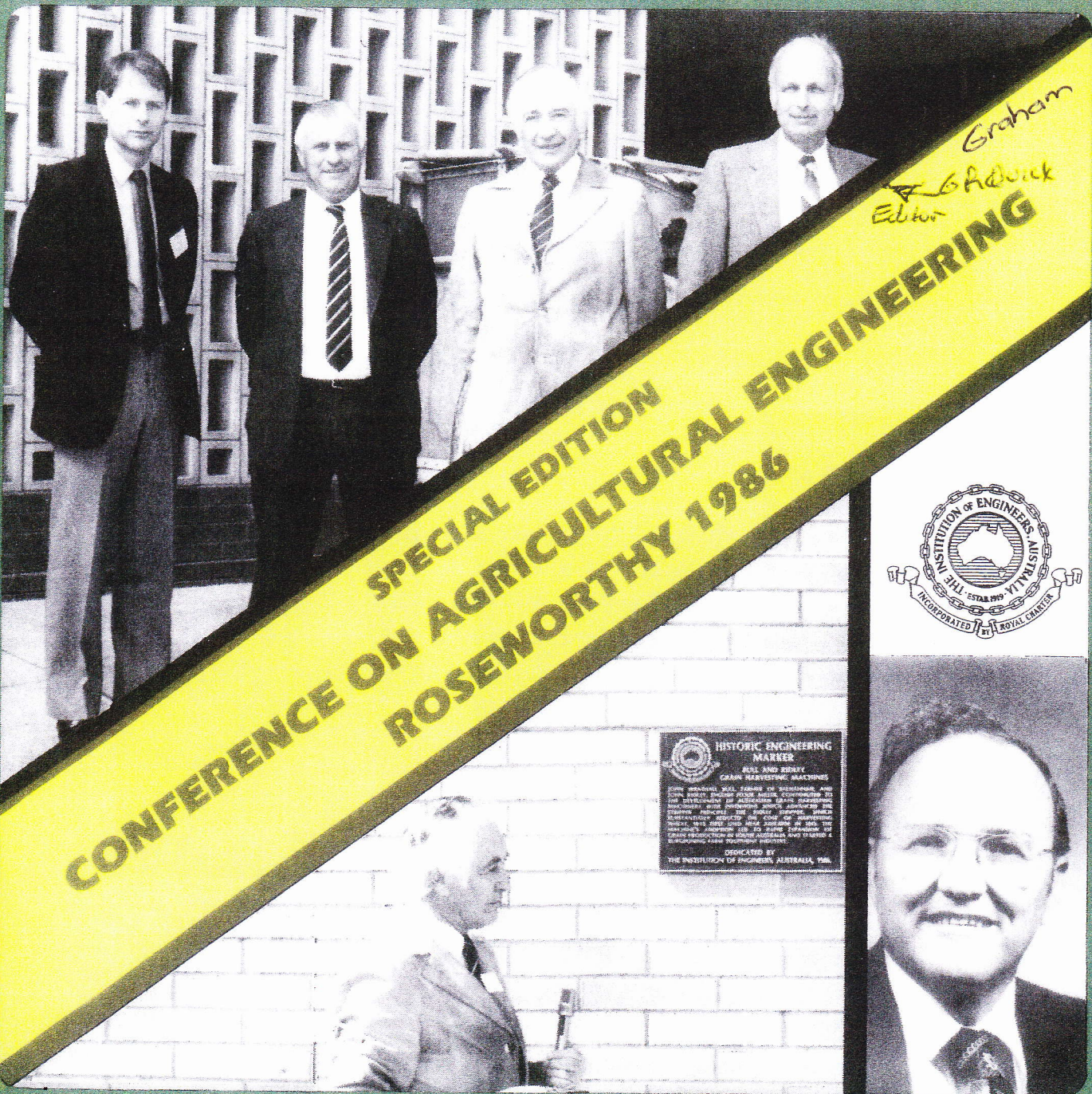




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INSTITUTION UNVEILS HISTORIC STRIPPER MARKER

The Institution of Engineers, Australia, is the professional society for all graduate engineers in Australia. The Institution has a National Committee on Agricultural Engineering which serves the interests of professional engineers working in agriculture. This committee organises the biennial National Conference on Agricultural Engineering, and among its other activities it has initiated a program of commemorative plaques recognising the historical contributions to agriculture of engineering developments.

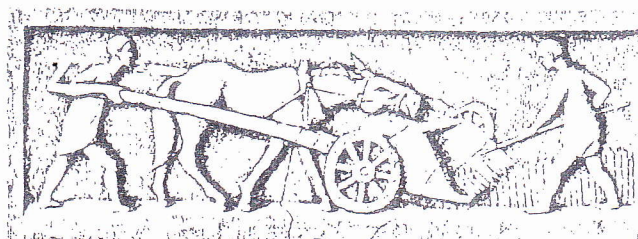
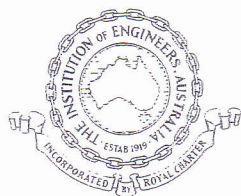
The plaques are intended to increase community awareness of the importance of contributions made by the predecessors or members of the Agricultural Engineering profession, and to give the Institution and the Engineering profession a higher public profile.

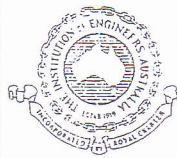
The first plaque was unveiled in Bundaberg during the Agricultural Engineering Conference in 1984 and was dedicated to Toft, Massey-Ferguson and early sugarcane harvester developers. In 1985, the second and third historic markers were established in Victoria to coincide with that State's 150th birthday celebrations, marking the Furphy Water Cart at Shepparton and the contribution of HV McKay, in the Museum of Victoria.

The fourth historic marker was unveiled at Roseworthy College on August 25th by Walter Stamm, President of the Institution of Engineers, Australia. It commemorates John Wrathall Bull and John Ridley for their contributions to the development of early Australian grain harvesting technology with the stripper principle and harvesting machines. Controversy has raged for over a century as to whether Ridley had the concept before Bull and the issue still ruffles some people. Ridley was first to get a stripper to harvest wheat, but it was John Bull who was credited publically for the stripper principle by the Press and by displaying a mechanical model in September 1843 (while John Ridley remained strangely silent at the time). Bull accordingly would appear to be rightly acclaimed as the first with the comb and beaters principle. He claimed to have struck on the idea around Christmas 1842, when he was faced with a labour shortage to harvest his wheat.

Actually, the Gauls in a Roman Province used the stripper comb on a wheeled machine around AD 70. Anyone intrigued enough to want to delve further into this subject can read about the Gallic stripper in "The Grain Harvesters" by Quick and Buchele (ASAE 1978) or can find further information about Bull and Ridley in L.J Jones's paper: "John Ridley and the South Australian Stripper" (History of Technology. 5:55-101, 1980).

[G.R.Q]





HISTORIC ENGINEERING MARKER

BULL AND RIDLEY
GRAIN HARVESTING MACHINES

JOHN WRATHALL BULL, FARMER OF BALHANNAH, AND JOHN RIDLEY, ENGLISH FLOUR MILLER, CONTRIBUTED TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF AUSTRALIAN GRAIN HARVESTING MACHINERY WITH INVENTIONS WHICH ADVANCED THE STRIPPER PRINCIPLE. THE RIDLEY STRIPPER, WHICH SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCED THE COST OF HARVESTING WHEAT, WAS FIRST USED NEAR ADELAIDE IN 1843. THE MACHINE'S ADOPTION LED TO RAPID EXPANSION OF GRAIN PRODUCTION IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA AND STARTED A BURGEONING FARM EQUIPMENT INDUSTRY.

DEDICATED BY
THE INSTITUTION OF ENGINEERS, AUSTRALIA, 1986.